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It is gratifying to learn that there is a demand among students for an *elementary* Ethiopic grammar. It certainly adds still further evidence to the fact that a new and deep interest in Semitic philology is spreading over Europe and America.

Since the publication of Dillmann's "*Æthiopische Grammatik*" in 1857, very little has been done in Ethiopic grammar. With the exception of König's "*Neue Studien über Schrift, Aussprache und allgemeine Formenlehre des Æthiopischen*," published in 1877, nothing of importance has appeared. Dillmann's grammar has remained heretofore and will still remain the authority. The "*Grammatica Æthiopica*" cannot, in any sense of the term, be regarded as a rival of Dillmann's. The book does not claim to be critical or exhaustive. The author has given us, in a condensed form, the *essential elements* of the Ethiopic grammar. He has presented, in a clear and precise manner, and in as little space as possible, the necessary points of the grammar. One thing worthy of notice is the transliteration in Roman letters of the greater part of the Ethiopic words used in the text of the grammar. This is done in almost every case where any difficulty of pronunciation might present itself to the beginner.

Besides the grammar proper, there is given a full list of paradigms (pp. 1-18); a Bibliography (pp. 19-28); a Chrestomathy, containing the first four chapters of Genesis, taken from Dillmann's *Ochtateuch*, and several other small selections (pp. 29-45); and lastly a Glossary to the Chrestomathy (pp. 49-65).

It is a matter of regret that the author did not present us with an English, instead of a Latin, translation; for, as Dillmann remarks in the preface to his grammar, the latter language appears quite pedantic in an elementary text-book.

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NEUBAUER'S CATALOGUE OF HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS.*

Hebrew bibliography is of comparatively modern date; but it has already attained to a high degree of perfection. Comparing the earliest and the latest Hebrew bibliographical works, we notice among the former the *Sifthe-yeshenim*, of Sabathai ben Joseph (Amst. 1680), with about 2,360 titles; while in the *Ozar ha-shorashim*, of J. A. Benjacob (Wilna, 1880), their number has risen to 17,000. This great progress is mainly due to the exertions of trustees and managers of public libraries in collecting literary treasures and in making their contents known to scholars and students at home and abroad by the publication of descriptive catalogues. The Bodleian Library excels in both these respects. It possesses the best collection of Hebrew works and the best catalogues. The Bodleian includes no less than fourteen distinct collections of Hebrew MSS., foremost among them being the Hebrew Library founded by Rabbi David Oppenheimer of Prague (1707). This Rabbi was the first among the Jews to collect books and MSS. systematically. He had a list of *desiderata* prepared, and employed agents to travel in all directions in search of rare and interesting works. His library was, however, moved from place to place; for a long time it lay at Hamburg stored away in boxes, hidden from the sight of man. No Mecaenas or institution was found on the Continent rich and liberal enough to rescue it out of the darkness. The Bodleian has

* CATALOGUE OF THE HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY AND IN THE COLLEGE LIBRARIES OF OXFORD. Compiled by Ad. Neubauer. With Forty Facsimiles. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

the merit of having brought this treasure of Hebrew learning to light and made it accessible to the public. Another important collection, likewise brought over from Germany, is that of the learned bibliophile Hyman Joseph Michael of Hamburg (born 1792).

Of the printed Hebrew books in the Bodleian, Dr. M. Steinschneider compiled an elaborate catalogue (1860), which, as Dr. Neubauer justly remarks, might rather be called "Bibliotheca Judaica." Part of the MSS. have been described by Johannes Uri, 1787, and also by Dr. Steinschneider in an Appendix to the catalogue. The present catalogue, compiled by Dr. Neubauer, includes not only all Hebrew MSS. contained in the Bodleian, but also those of the college libraries of Oxford. It possesses all the qualities required to make the work as perfect as possible. It is a rich source of interesting information, given in a concise and clear manner, "without discursiveness and without references to other catalogues or to periodicals, unless strictly necessary." The catalogue is not overstocked with research and learning, like the catalogue of the printed books in the Bodleian, nor filled with unnecessary and lengthy treatises, like the first instalment of the catalogue of the Hebrew MSS. in the Cambridge University library. There is just so much information to be found in Dr. Neubauer's catalogue, and just so many extracts from the MSS., as those interested in the subject would desire to find in a work of this kind, without being compelled to go through a mass of literary discussions. Where necessary, Dr. Neubauer has spared no trouble, and has given the most detailed information. Such is, e. g., the case in No. 1390, which contains a "Hebrew translation of Aegidius' Commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*," and forty-nine philosophical treatises by various authors. Every one of these treatises is described by its full title. No. 814 includes forty-two *responsa*, of which likewise a full account is given. Two sections of the Catalogue, viz., Liturgy and Poetry, are especially distinguished in this respect. Siddur, Machzor, and Divan are unrolled before the reader from beginning to end. Not a single prayer, not the smallest poem has been omitted.

The age and country of each MS. is correctly stated where possible. That this is not always an easy task may be noticed even in the first MS. The date, as it at present stands—**ה'תתס"ד**—is 5864 A. M. This is impossible, the present year being described by Jews as 5646 A. M. Mr. Neubauer, however, noticed an erasure in the first letter (*he*), and is perfectly right in assuming that the original *daleth* has been altered into *he* by some ignorant critic. The correctness of the conjecture (though finally abandoned by Dr. Neubauer himself, col. 1149) is supported by the error of Leon de Modena, who states that the MS. was written 5064. This scholar must have read *resh* instead of *daleth*; at all events, there was no *he* when he saw the date of the MS. in the year 1628.

The classification of Hebrew books presents likewise a peculiar difficulty, as the titles rarely give an idea of the contents of the book. One would hardly expect to find "Libesbrif" (No. 1420) in the section "Ethics," or *Ahabhah betha'anughim* ("Love in Delights") among the theological works (No. 1291).

It is remarkable that this rich collection of Hebrew MSS., in which every branch of Hebrew literature is so well represented, contains no biblical MS. of earlier date than the twelfth century, and no complete copy of the Talmud. To some extent this fact may be explained by the hostility displayed in the Middle Ages by Christians towards Jews and their literature. The destruction of Jewish houses, synagogues, and colleges, with all their literary contents, was no uncom-

mon occurrence in those days of darkness and fanaticism. Cartloads of copies of the Talmud were confiscated and burnt. The loss of their books was felt, especially by scholars, as a more severe blow than the loss of all other valuables. Expression of this feeling we find in extracts given by Dr. Neubauer from MSS. Nos. 254, 326, 448. The entire absence of early copies of biblical books remains, nevertheless, a strange phenomenon.

Students of Hebrew literature, who may have to consult the Catalogue, will find great assistance in the numerous tables and indexes which Dr. Neubauer has prepared with so much care, and which are arranged in the most practical way. But, even independently of the Catalogue, the indexes are in many respects useful and suggestive. The antiquary, the philologist, the statistician, and the historian will find here interesting problems for further research. Of special interest and value as regards palaeography are the facsimiles which represent in forty plates almost all variations of Hebrew square, rabbinic, and cursive writings. Thirty-nine of these are taken from MSS. in the Bodleian library; and one (xlx.) from a St. Petersburg MS.

In conclusion, we congratulate Dr. Neubauer and the Bodleian upon the production of this useful and elegant work, and we hope that the British Museum will follow so excellent an example.

M. FRIEDLAENDER, in *The Academy* (Aug. 28.)